CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Thursday, 14 February 1991, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. W. Rasaputram (Sri Lanka)

GE.91-60319/2920B

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 582nd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the very beginning, I wish to extend a warm welcome in the Conference to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, who will address this plenary meeting. The Minister has been following our work very closely, as shown by his visits to the Conference, where he has presented on many occasions the views of his Government on disarmament matters, in particular one of the high-priority subjects on our agenda, the banning of chemical weapons. I wish to thank His Excellency Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati for his interest in the work of the Conference and for his presence among us today.

I am happy to report to you that my consultations on organizational arrangements for a number of agenda items have made substantial progress during the last week; we should now be in a position to take decisions on many of those questions which have been pending. Once the list of speakers is exhausted, we shall proceed to take up those questions requiring a decision by the Conference.

I have on my list of speakers today His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the representatives of Sweden, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, Cameroon, Indonesia and Peru. I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati.

Mr. VELAYATI (Islamic Republic of Iran): The first month of the work in the Conference on Disarmament is always the most challenging and difficult part of the year. Your able and wise leadership during this period, Mr. President, is well recognized and appreciated. Finding myself once again in your midst gives me mixed feelings: the pleasure of talking and exchanging views with you, and the discomfort of having to share with you yet another tragic and sad experience in our region.

It is the paradox of history that the weapons provided to Iraq have now turned against their own suppliers. The Persian Gulf has now become the scene of the test of the most destructive weapons of our time. Cruise missiles are being battle-tested for the first time. Satellite-guided Slams, ultra-high-speed Patriots and ALARMs (air-launched anti-radar missiles) have come to the challenge of Scuds and Frogs. The destruction is frightening and the loss of life incalculable.

It is clear that this war will not solve problems, but rather exacerbate existing inequalities and injustices, leading to an escalated arms race. I am not going to argue here whether the arms race breeds tension or tension accelerates the arms race. It is, however, clear that they are mutually reinforcing. Proliferation, limitation, restriction or prohibition as well as arms control and disarmament are all properly security concerns, whether national, regional or international. The problem of the arms race is inextricably linked to regional security issues. Efforts to limit the arms race are linked to the process of eliminating existing hotbeds of tension,

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removing sources of inequalities and injustices, properly addressing the security concerns of all, and following an impartial and principled approach to existing problems.

The situation in the Persian Gulf is getting out of hand. The crisis which was initiated by Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and exacerbated by the unprecedented and massive foreign military build-up in the region - with objectives that go beyond the liberation of Kuwait - has now entered the fifth week of an all-out war with no apparent end in sight. The destruction and instability brought to the region in the space of the last seven months, which is clearly the result of irresponsible policies of the past, is beyond reason.

The massive loss of human life, in particular the not so collateral civilian casualties, was certainly not what was envisaged or proclaimed at the adoption of Security Council resolution 678. The destruction of Iraq and Kuwait as well as the economic resources of the region is hardly compatible with the maintenance of regional and international peace and security. Furthermore, insistence, seemingly by both sides, on a military solution as well as statements concerning the post-war situation paint an uncertain and indeed dangerous picture for the future of the Persian Gulf.

Under these circumstances, it is of vital necessity to work out a political solution based on Iraq's unconditional and complete withdrawal from Kuwait, the withdrawal of foreign forces from the region, the inviolability of international boundaries in the Persian Gulf and respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all States in that area.

The imperative need for the creation of a "security and co-operation arrangement in the Persian Gulf area" is now more than ever evident. In 1986, the Islamic Republic of Iran presented the idea of the establishment of such a system, and Security Council resolution 598 provides the necessary institutional framework. The long-term security and stability of the region and the undeniable necessity of preventing further occurrences of aggression demand the creation of such an arrangement through the initiative of the countries of the Persian Gulf region with the co-operation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, which would provide the necessary assurances and ensure its compatibility with United Nations principles and objectives.

The "security and co-operation arrangement in the Persian Gulf area" must include all countries of the region, as any exclusion would be the seed of future tension and instability. It is equally necessary that such a system should be free from foreign presence, intervention and interference, as these practices are historically and inherently destabilizing.

On the basis of these principles, the Islamic Republic of Iran took every step to prevent a war, and at this stage is actively seeking a responsible political solution to bring an end to the war with its disastrous consequences. We have maintained our channels of communication with the leadership of Iraq as well as those of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other countries in the region. We believe that every effort should be directed towards fostering political will on both sides for the attainment of these principles, which would pave the way for the formulation of a comprehensive

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proposal to end the hostilities. With this in view, our President presented an "idea for peace" to the President of Iraq during the recent visit by Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister. The contacts and dialogue are continuing, and it is our understanding that there is room for the continuation of diplomatic activities, and thus we will continue our efforts individually and within the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement on the basis of the decision taken two days ago in Belgrade.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region and the indiscriminate use of chemical weapons in the past decade are now coupled with the spectre of their possible use in the Persian Gulf war. Any such use will undoubtedly bring about unpredictable consequences whose implications could be catastrophic for all. Even talk here and there by officials of the warring parties is dangerous.

It is even more alarming that not only threats exist of the possible use of chemical weapons, but there is even reference to a possible resort to nuclear arms. Aside from an immediate need to prevent such a disastrous situation in this conflict, one is now more inclined to insist, for the long term, that any commitment regarding weapons of mass destruction ought to be comprehensive and include chemical weapons and nuclear weapons as well as sophisticated conventional weaponry. With regard to nuclear weapons, one could now conclude that accession to the non-proliferation Treaty by all States seems a necessary requirement.

The draft convention on chemical weapons should also be freed of any discriminatory provisions. It should enhance the security of all nations. Ideas such as the retention of chemical weapon stocks, whatever the pretext, will give the impression of the military utility of such weapons and will be detrimental to our common cause.

Furthermore, universality is the keyword for our work in this regard. The incentives for joining the convention and disincentives for those who remain outside will play a determining role in this respect. Since underdevelopment poses a threat to the security of developing countries, any provision which may harm the legitimate development of civil chemical industry should be prevented.

But still, the most significant task to be tackled in order to ensure universality and prepare suitable ground whereby States would find it safe and secure to join the convention is to maintain a balance at the global, and more importantly at the regional level for the security of States. The fact that the chemical weapons convention would generally enhance the security of States remains valid, but this cannot be sufficient when one comes to the actual point of making a decision to join this convention. For each country, national security reigns supreme. Every State will wish to have enough assurances that its security will not be diminished through joining the convention. I must add that this is particularly relevant in regions which are hotbeds of tension and where chemical weapons have already been used.

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Let me conclude by reiterating that the effects of the current crisis in the Persian Gulf will go beyond the region, although its consequences for future stability and security in the region itself will be immense and long-lasting. In reality, this crisis will determine whether political or military solutions will prevail in international affairs. One way or another, both parties have chosen the military option, which in fact will only be a lost game. Our individual and joint efforts should all be directed at reversing this trend and generating the necessary political will to prevent the catastrophe from gaining further momentum. My country will spare no effort in this regard.

The PRESIDENT: I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his important statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden, Ambassador Hyltenius.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): I have listened with great interest to the important statement just made by His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I am sure that it will be read with great interest in many capitals, including my own.

My delegation today wishes to introduce document CD/1053 on "Verification of the chemical industry within the general pattern of verification of a chemical weapons convention".

The proposal contained in CD/1053 is already well known to all delegations. A first version was circulated for consultations to all groups and China in November. My delegation made a special presentation in the Group of 21, and was gratified also to be invited to the Group of Western States for a detailed discussion. Delegations from all groups and several observer delegations approached us during the inter-sessional period to obtain clarifications and share their preliminary views. By and large my delegation has been encouraged to proceed and to develop the ideas contained in the consultation paper.

In elaborating the new document, which is now before you, we have thus been able to draw on a considerable amount of comments from a large number of delegations. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those delegations that have spent time studying our proposal and conveying their views and questions to us. The amendments and additions that have been made to the paper are mainly aimed at clarifying a number of points, but a few substantive additions have also been made. The fact that the basic approach of the paper has not been questioned by any delegation that has studied it in detail gives us good hope that the paper will be given serious consideration in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

Against this background any further introduction may be superfluous. Still, I would like to make some general comments. First, I would like to state what this paper is not. It is not a tactical proposal for the purpose of unlocking the apparent stalemate in discussions on verification in the chemical industry. My delegation has for a long time had doubts regarding the cost-effectiveness of schedule 2 verification as provided for in the draft convention. These doubts have matured over the years. The intense

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involvement of my delegation in the evaluation of the many national trial inspections has given us ample opportunity to take a close look at the provisions of annex II to article VI.

The NTI exercise taught us a limited lesson, namely that the inspections envisaged in annex II to article VI in the draft convention could technically be implemented. The Committee chose to stop at that conclusion. The national trial inspections as designed, however, could not serve to demonstrate that such inspections were effective in terms of an overall verification objective. Only a few delegations commented openly on the apparent futility of "crawling around one single reactor or production line" for a day when a number of similar reactors on the premises were undeclared and not even available for any kind of verification except on challenge. The doubts, which everyone that carried out an NTI must have felt, were however expressed by some through proposals for additions to the system in the shape of ad hoc inspections.

While discussing these proposals my delegation gradually came to the conclusion that an imperfect system would hardly get any better by adding to it. Instead, we started to look for ways and means to amend the present system in such a way that a comprehensive and unified approach could be taken to the chemical industry in its entirety. In doing so we had to depart from an imperfect material-balance verification of a narrow segment of the relevant industry to follow a verification concept that creates transparency in the entire industry concerned, combined with selective on-site verification efforts, either directed or at random. The outline given in CD/1053 is thus a proposal in its own right, which should be discussed and judged on its own merits and not in the light of provisions in the "rolling text" or other proposals under discussion.

The second thing this proposal is not is an unravelling of the "rolling text", an undoing of work done. This new approach is, rather, a redirection within a given framework. It builds on what has been already achieved or discussed, including experience from national trial inspections. Furthermore, the proposal in CD/1053 can contribute to solving some difficult outstanding issues. Thus the present schedule 2 verification in the "rolling text" cannot be said to be really agreed until the issues of modalities for determining the frequency of inspections and the actual contents of schedule 2 have been resolved. And those are major and difficult tasks. The approach in CD/1053 would resolve the issue of frequency and would permit a quick and easy compromise on the contents of the schedules. Finally, in the view of my delegation, the incorporation of CD/1053 into the "rolling text" would not require any major effort.

Far from re-opening a closed chapter, the outline in CD/1053 would permit the Conference to conclude one of the most difficult unresolved parts of the chemical weapons negotiations, namely how to create a sufficient degree of confidence that capabilities in the chemical industry are not misused for purposes prohibited by the convention, without undue intrusiveness and interference in perfectly legitimate industrial activities, and without causing unacceptable costs to the States parties.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

As I have stated, CD/1053 is in the first place an outline in which the details are to be developed. Discussion of it should therefore first focus on its basic concepts. Among its basic concepts I would like to underline the obligation to declare all CW-capable plant sites, whether or not they actually produce listed chemicals, and thereby the undertaking to accept short-notice on-site inspections at any of these. Such inspections should be streamlined and aimed primarily at verifying declarations on planned activities and the absence of activities that should have been declared. It is of particular importance to note that such inspections, according to the proposal, would focus on ongoing activities instead of trying to verify past activities. This helps to avoid unnecessary anomalies and ambiguities.

Hence we have on the one hand, broader openness and transparency than hitherto contemplated, and on the other hand less intrusiveness and interference in those cases where an actual inspection is carried out. My delegaiton proposes to identify CW-capable facilities through the use of certain chemical conversion processes. It might not be possible to use this classification absolutely unambiguously for each and every plant site. It is the view of my delegation, however, that a list of chemical conversion processes would be sufficiently clear to implement obligations under the convention. The responsibility to define exactly how the obligation to declare should be implemented in each State party could be entrusted to national legislation. Certainly, guidelines could be recommended through consultative multilateral work in the preparatory commission.

The negative verification approach, coupled with the absence of facility agreements in CD/1053, goes a long way towards streamlining the actual inspections and responding to legitimate concerns regarding confidentiality in industry. In fact, Sweden has carried out a national trial inspection on the basis of the approach taken in CD/1053. The result was encouraging. The inspectors were satisfied with the verification result - the absence of any production of listed chemicals - and the facility was particularly satisfied at the absence of a facility agreement, the elaboration of which would have required the facility to provide sensitive process information in written form.

Many delegations have asked questions regarding the selection of facilities for inspection. In the view of my delegation this problem is not of major importance. The overall approach, including the declaration régime, the concentration on production, the definition of CW-capable industry and the similar treatment of schedules 2 and 3, should be discussed first. Were those elements to be accepted, the selection principles could certainly be negotiated without too much difficulty.

It has been natural for my delegation to build on the present annex II in providing for obligatory inspections in those facilities that actually produce schedule 2 and schedule 3 chemicals. In addition, it is proposed that inspections should take place in these as well as in other CW-capable facilities through a system which blends directed efforts with random selection. We think all of these elements may be necessary. How actually to combine them - a higher or lesser degree of random selection - can certainly be discussed. But again, in the view of my delegation, this is a practical detail rather than a matter of principle in our proposal.

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CD/1053 is largely self-explanatory. I have therefore only tried briefly to comment further on some of the salient points and to dissipate any possible misunderstanding of the paper, its contents and objectives. It is now in the hands of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. We look forward to more formal discussion of it.

Mr. KRALIK (Czechoslovakia): First of all, Mr. President, we would like to extend to you our warm congratulations on taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament, and thank you for discharging your important responsibilities during the starting phase of our work. I also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to your predecessor, Mr. Chirila, who fulfilled the duties of President in August and during the inter-sessional period. My delegation sincerely welcomes the presence of the distinguished Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who addressed the Conference at the beginning of this plenary meeting.

Since the last session of the Conference the very skilful Ambassadors Ait Chaalal, Reese, Kostov, Varga, Sujka and Kosin have left Geneva. We extend a most cordial welcome to the new representatives of Algeria, Australia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia. We wish them every success.

Mr. President, you have invited us to avoid topics not belonging to this forum. It is a justified appeal, justified because it gives us the chance to devote more attention to the subjects really pertaining to disarmament. No doubt, the Conference cannot remain indifferent to the fact that there are growing apprehensions of the use of chemical and other non-conventional weapons. And this, above all, in those countries where the renowned nuclear mushroom has not appeared yet, but where an equally terrifying ecological bomb with boundless consequences for the flora and fauna of a region compared at one time to the biblical Eden has already exploded.

The assurance of some experts that the potential aggressor is not sufficiently technically prepared to use chemical weapons is, doubtless, a very meagre consolation. History teaches us the very opposite, and that is why I would like to mention in this connection the far-sighted message of Winston Churchill. With prophetic words this great statesman addressed humanity soon after Hitler's ruthless annexation of Austria and his brutal violation of Czechoslovakia, and before his preparations to attack Poland.

> "Is he going to try to blow up the world or not? The world is a very heavy thing to blow up! An extraordinary man at a pinnacle of power may create a great explosion, and yet the civilized world may remain unshaken. The enormous fragments and splinters may clatter down upon his own head and destroy him ... but the world will go on".

And the world went on. But at what a price! We recall it bitterly - in Europe as well as in the other continents. That is the reason why the new blows of destruction are not only a matter of apprehension for the Middle East nations. The best remedy against fear is positive behaviour. Therefore, I believe that this Conference should also take a positive step. Following the example of the group of 11 Latin American countries, and developing the ideas of President Mitterrand and other statesmen, we could, for example, renew the

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initiative we were talking about last year. As an example, the Conference could possibly initiate a joint declaration by the member States of the Conference on Disarmament and those having observer status, undertaking not to be the first to use chemical weapons during the period of negotiations on the CWC.

I would like to devote my statement today to questions concerning the prohibition of chemical weapons (CW) and the finalization of the chemical weapons convention (CWC). In recent years, the Ad Hoc Committee on CW has moved toward completion of the CWC. However, there are certain open questions to be solved, some of them of a technical nature and some of a political character. In respect of both - political and technical - different working papers have been distributed dealing with various aspects of the future CWC. In the interests of openness and - if possible - obtaining more information from the States parties to the future CWC, the majority of delegations, including Czechoslovakia (in document CD/949) have presented working papers about their chemical potential. However, with a view to the future development of the "rolling text", a more detailed assessment of the needs of inspectors and financial aspects, and clarification of some technical questions, in my last statement in August 1990 our delegation announced a new document. The document contains very detailed data on Czechoslovakia's chemical potential, including not only qualitative but also quantitative data on the production, processing, consumption, export and import of chemicals falling under the scope of the future CWC. This document, numbered CD/1048, has just been distributed.

Let me say a few words about the philosophy of our approach. As stated in the past, and I can repeat it once again, Czechoslovakia has no CW. Our country also intends, and this is well known, to be an original party to the CWC. That is why we approach the CWC very seriously. Today I wish to inform you that we synthesize compounds on schedule 1, as you can see from the document distributed, of course in much smaller quantities than those permitted by the proposals contained in the present "rolling text".

In a spirit of good will and on a voluntary basis, we also declare and specify the facilities, including their owners and locations. We believe that after this declaration there will be a clearer picture of the verification requirements of the future CWC in one country. We hope for similar openness from other States because these data, taken together, are connected with personnel, equipment and other needs for implementation of the CWC. Let me inform distinguished delegations that these data can also be verified in a very simple way. Last year, bilateral talks were held between the United States Embassy in Prague and our Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, and on 17 December 1990 - on the basis of an agreement - United States specialists visited a Czechoslovak military facility in Slovakia used for synthesis of super-toxic lethal chemicals. As a result of this visit it was confirmed that the schedule 1 chemicals produced cannot be considered to be CW. For the same purpose, the commander of the facility authorized the use of a computerized data base to review the production of chemicals in a year selected at random from a 10-year period. The professionalism of the facility and its workers were appreciated. This high level of professionalism of Czechoslovak scientists can be documented now on the basis of the activities of a small but qualified group of military specialists in the Gulf.

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All these data serve as evidence of Czechoslovakia's interest in finalizing the CWC as soon as possible. More evidence of our real concern for chemical disarmament is provided by the withdrawal of our reservations to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, announced by Foreign Minister Dienstbier of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic at the forty-fifth United Nations General Assembly.

To illustrate further our efforts in preparation for the CWC, I also wish to inform you of the establishment of a working group for preparatory work on a national committee for the future CWC. We are now in the process of forming this committee, and following its initial activities we shall inform the CD of the practical results.

As far as practical verification is concerned, I would also like to point out that we are willing to invite interested delegations, on a bilateral basis, to visit the facility presented in document CD/1048, and we are able to extend the spectrum of facilities which can be visited at other Czechoslovak establishments dealing with CW-related topics.

My delegation looks forward to and counts on the completion of our CW negotiations as soon as possible, probably this year. The revised "rolling text" provides a unique basis for redoubling our common efforts. The regrettable consequences of the events taking place in the Gulf are pushing us towards the early conclusion of the chemical weapons convention. I would like to assure the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union, Serguei Batsanov, the new Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, of my delegation's full support and co-operation in its further deliberations and in his very important task. At the same time I would like to express appreciation and respect to Ambassador Hyltenius and his colleagues on the Swedish delegation for the excellent work they have done during the last year. In full awareness of the importance of the words of Albert Camus - "La vraie générosité envers l'avenir, consiste à tout donner au présent" - I wish the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons much success in its future activities.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador O'Sullivan.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (Australia): Mr. President, I am pleased to take the floor for the first time at this Conference under your presidency, in particular because of the friendly ties that have existed for so long between our two countries.

This is a sombre period in which to be assuming duties as Ambassador for Disarmament. But it is also a time when the opportunities and the necessity for disarmament and restraints on arms transfers are more apparent than ever. The war in the Gulf is a tragic reminder that the enormous improvement in the international environment which emerged in 1989 does not necessarily or inevitably lead to greater peace and stability in every region. On the contrary, one of the ironic effects of the ending of the cold war is that in regions outside Europe the security environment may well have become more complex and more difficult to calculate. The emerging world, one commentator

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has said, "is likely to lack the clarity and stability of the cold war, and to be a more jungle-like world of multiple dangers, hidden traps, unpleasant surprises and moral ambiguities". This will be particularly so if pressures from regional arms races result in the further proliferation of conventional, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and the spread of missile technology. With the experience of recent weeks, the international community will expect these questions to be addressed with renewed vigour.

Under these circumstances, the relevance and salience of the work of this Conference has increased. The threat of the use of chemical weapons in the Gulf war makes the achievement of a complete ban of chemical weapons for all times and in all environments even more urgently required. I will therefore address chemical weapons issues principally in this statement today.

The Australian Government is fully committed to a ban which would make chemical weapons illegal and which would prohibit their use. We believe our security and that of our neighbours would be enhanced by a binding multilateral commitment which assured us all that we would not face the threat of these horrible weapons. We believe that the international political conditions exist to bring such a ban into effect by concluding these negotiations. We hope in this final stage of the convention negotiations that we will recapture in 1991 the spirit that was evident two years ago at the Paris Conference and 18 months ago at the Canberra Conference, when Governments and the chemical industry committed themselves to that same objective.

We recognize however that there is a limit what officials here in Geneva may be able to achieve through the processes of negotiation and that higher-level involvement may be necessary to provide the political direction to break through the remaining problems. We therefore support calls for a meeting at ministerial level.

As we see it, the purpose of such a meeting would be to overcome political impasses in the negotiations and to give final instructions to permit the conclusion of a balanced treaty package. This requires careful preparation of the elements of such a package. It could be that we will need to prepare options so that ministers would be able to assess which proposals are both feasible in their impact on industry and credible in their contribution to collective security. A second reason for suggesting and supporting a ministerial-level meeting would be to help promote universal adherence to it. As a newcomer to this Conference I observe that there is a considerable part of the world which is not represented here. Even amongst Governments which are here represented there are different constituences in different countries which will need to be educated about the treaty. This means there is a significant "selling job" ahead of us to have a treaty supported as widely as possible amongst Governments and as broadly as possible within Governments.

Of course participation in the deliberations of this Conference is not limited to its 39 member States. We were pleased to see the Conference approve, on 31 January, the application for observer status of 34 nations. We would have been even happier if that number had been larger, particularly as we approach the final phase, of the negotiations of a multilateral chemical weapons convention.

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Clearly one of the most efficient and productive ways to understand the objectives and the political, legal and practical implications of a future CWC is through active participation in the negotiations themselves. In practice, this opportunity has been realized by a number of observer delegations, and especially in our CWC negotiations. Observer States can and do participate both through the submission of working papers and orally in the proceedings of the CWC Ad Hoc Committee and its working groups. During the course of the negotiations in 1991 we would encourage non-member States to make known their views on specific aspects of the "rolling text" of concern to them so that they can be considered fully.

Another approach to promoting universality that has made sense to Australia has been to engage in a serious dialogue with our neighbours in the Asia/Pacific areas about this treaty and what it would imply for them. I had the privilege of being present in Brisbane in November 1990 at the second regional seminar against chemical weapons hosted by the Australian Government. There were 23 regional States present of whom only three are colleagues here in the CD; that is Indonesia, Burma and ourselves. It was apparent that there is a big gap in understanding this far-reaching and complex treaty between those of us who sit in this room and who are familiar in detail with its concepts and its specific provisions, and those busy government officials in other countries who are not here but who nevertheless will be required to undertake the considerable administrative and commercial requirements that the convention will impose.

In asking Governments to accept those requirements we need to be clear that we are delivering tangible security benefits in return. This means to our minds that the concepts and working arrangements that are embodied in the treaty particularly in the area of verification must not be designed to be so elaborate or to be required to cover such highly theoretical possibilities that they put at risk those benefits. Ultimately the treaty like all treaties can only bind with ropes of paper. If there is not the political willingness to abide by its provisions then its internal mechanisms cannot force proper behaviour on States. But on the other hand, a well-balanced, sensible, clear treaty can establish norms and give confidence to all its adherents that its benefits of enhanced security and equal commercial impact will be realized.

In order to achieve that equal commercial impact, the Australian Government has actively sought collaboration with the international chemical industry not as a partner with us here in the negotiations but as an interested and knowledgeable resource on whom much of the impact of this convention will fall. A recent example of productive Government-industry exchanges was the meeting in January 1991 in Bangkok of the ASEAN Chemical Industries Club at which a colleague from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade was able to give a presentation on the state of our negotiations here. It is also pleasing that this Conference has had further involvement with industry over the past year. And may I say that we welcome very much the ideas put forward by Sweden this morning in document CD/1053? We will examine them sympathetically and closely.

For our part, the Australian Government and the Australian chemical industry will continue to look for opportunities to continue this dialogue with our regional neighbours so that all States in our region will be well

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prepared to become adherents to the completed convention. In this context, the Australian Government intends to host a workshop for regional chemists in Melbourne in the middle of this year with the aim of providing the necessary background and training to those technical advisers to Governments who will be required to complete declarations and assemble technical data. We are indebted to our Finnish colleagues for the model they have established and without shame we have adapted their work for our own region. May I add here that we admire the work that Dr. Rautio and her experts continue to produce? Associated with the workshop in Melbourne for regional chemists we plan to hold a multilateral trial inspection of a chemical plant there. We welcome the intention of the Governments of Venezuela and Nigeria to engage in similar exercises aimed at raising consciousness of the benefits and the requirements of the convention, and would encourage other members of this Conference to undertake similar exercises in their regions as tangible ways of soliciting support and promoting universal adherence to the concluded convention.

Australia has also been putting into place the administrative structure that will be needed once the convention comes into effect. We have found this to be no simple matter with a federal constitution and varying State and local government regulations. In the hope that our experiences may be of use to other nations, I have asked the secretariat to distribute today as a Conference document CD/1055, a strategy paper outlining how we have approached the establishment of our national chemical weapons convention secretariat, and we will look forward to the document that our Czechoslovak colleague has foreshadowed earlier this morning giving us details of Czechoslovakia's experiences in the same area.

During 1990 under the able leadership of Ambassdor Hyltenius, good progress was made in cleaning up the "rolling text" in a way which makes it internally more consistent, concise and readable. One major impediment to the cleaning-up process and to substantive progress in the negotiations has been a large number of unattributed footnotes, in many cases their authorship now unknown and raisdon d'être forgotten as the years of negotiating have rolled on. In the past the CD tradition, as I understand it, was not to attribute footnotes. The state of the negotiations is now, I believe, such that it would be useful to be able to identify the originators of footnotes in order to facilitate their removal if there is no reason for them to remain, or to help us understand more fully the authors' thinking in order to find a solution as these negotiations conclude. In brief, we propose that all delegations use the first session of this year's work in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons to identify footnotes they have inserted in the "rolling text" and to transmit these to the secretariat for compilation and distrbution to all the participants. The secretariat could also assist if it is able to identify old footnotes to the extent that its records permit it do so. Any footnotes not so "claimed" should simply be deleted. Once this process has been completed, we would be in a much better position to tackle in a more purposeful way the substance of the remaining attributed footnotes.

Another matter which is of great concern to the Australian Government is that the provisions of the treaty relating to the destruction of existing chemical weapons should ensure there is a clear commitment to environmentally safe procedures. Our view is that the provisions of the convention should be developed on this point. This is a particular concern to Australia and to

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nations of the Pacific because of the operation of the CW destruction facility at Johnston Atoll. Australia supports that facility's operations on the basis that its scope is limited to the destruction of the stockpiles currently there and that its operation continues in a manner which is fully compatible with environmental safety. This is a matter on which the Australian Prime Minister has take a direct interest and to which he is personally deeply committed.

Stepping back from the actual provisions of the "rolling text" and ways to bring these negotiations to an early conclusion Australia believes the threat posed by the spread of chemical weapons is regrettably growing and not just in the Middle East. This concern underlines the urgency of the task before us and gives particular point to our security concerns which can only be met by a multilateral, verifiable, broadly supported convention. I am pleased to advise today that Australia will be an original signatory to such a convention.

Turning briefly to other items on our agenda the Australian Government looks forward to the early re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. There is useful work to be done under its existing mandate. We wish that a comprehensive test ban be achieved at an early date and that nuclear testing become a relic of the past. We have noted that the Soviet Union and the United States and to a lesser extent France have reduced nuclear weapons tests in recent years. We consider these to be moves in the right direction. We hope the number and yields of nuclear tests continue to decline.

The cessation of nuclear testing is one of the items on the CD's agenda relevant to the broader objective of nuclear non-proliferation. We are concerned that the NPT treaty embodying the norms of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons could not be reviewed last September in a way that led to an agreed final document. We nevertheless welcome the thorough review that took place and wish to see the recommendations agreed on addressed in the International Atomic Energy Agency and elsewhere. We consider that the NPT has made a major contribution to international peace and security. It has served the security interests of its adherents. We wish to work with others to improve its functioning in the period leading up to its extension conference in 1995. We consider it vital that all members of the Treaty demonstrate through their actions and their statements that they are living up to their obligations under the Treaty and that the Treaty be extended on an assured basis. We hope that the next five years will see a greater commitment by all States to a world free of nuclear proliferation and in this regard we warmly welcome the recent statements by the Presidents of Argentina and Brazil.

We look forward to the early re-establishment of the Committee on outer space and we will continue to work fully and co-operatively with that Committee to consider how outer space can be spared an arms race. I will be dealing with this and other matters of the CD's agenda in a subsequent intervention. Finally, I take this occasion to observe that in the years since 1978 when it was established the Conference on Disarmament has grappled with its difficult mandate as the sole multilateral negotiating body set up to produce credible and workable arms control and disarmament agreements. Australia hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will be able to make a significant contribution to an enhanced world order based on the rule of law

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and the principles of the United Nations Charter. Although much will depend on the outcome of the Gulf war, we believe this year we have the opportunity to do so through the conclusion of a chemical weapons convention.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Australia for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Germany, Ambassador Ritter von Wagner.

Mr. von WAGNER (Germany): A number of countries have reported to the Conference on Disarmament the outcome of national chemical weapons practice challenge inspections, including the Netherlands, Canada, the United Kingdom and Germany. All these exercises were intended to test the procedures that we have already worked out in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, in order to draw lessons from practical experience and thus contribute to the completion of an effective challenge inspection régime by providing a better understanding of the problems involved. Most recently Canada and the Netherlands introduced in CD/1052 the report on their joint trial challenge inspection at a military base in Germany. Today I would like to introduce, on behalf of both the United Kingdom and Germany, a report on two joint CW practice challenge inspections carried out in military facilities. The detailed report on the outcome of these exercises is tabled as document CD/1056 - working paper CD/CW/WP.330.

In view of the extensive experience both countries had already gained in the course of their previous national practice challenge inspections (PCIs), the two joint exercises, one in each country, were intended to give added realism to the PCI concept, to re-examine once more the conclusions they had reached so far, and to see what further lessons could be learned. The first exercise was held in the Federal Republic of Germany from 21 to 23 May 1990 at an air force base. The exercise was conducted under joint Anglo-German control, with the United Kingdom providing the inspection team and challenging State observer, and the Federal Republic the home team. The second exercise was held in the United Kingdom from 18 to 21 June 1990 at an ammunition storage facility. This exercise was also held under joint control, but with the roles reversed. Both countries concluded that the exercises had been conducted in a very positive and co-operative spirit, and that a number of lessons had been learned, both in confirming the conclusions that had been reached in their respective national PCIs, and in providing new insights and perspectives on the issue of challenge inspection.

Of the multitude of lessons learned, which include further practical experience in sample-taking and the use of instrumentation, like X-ray and mobile analytical equipment, and which are reported and discussed in detail in the report, let me highlight here only two of the principal conclusions drawn. Firstly, the two joint exercises have confirmed for both countries the key importance of the concept of challenge inspections, based on short notice as well as access to any challenged site, as an effective means for deterring circumvention of, as well as ensuring compliance with, the chemical weapons convention. Secondly, the joint exercises have demonstrated once more that, using managed access techniques in an intelligent and inventive way, inspectors are able to obtain the relevant information they seek, while sensitive information unrelated to chemical weapons remains protected. This has proved to be particularly true in applying the random selective access proposals elaborated in the United Kingdom paper, CD/1012.

(Mr. von Wagner, Germany)

The series of national PCIs in Germany will soon be continued in a chemical plant site, from which we expect to gain a better understanding of the problems related to the application of challenge inspections in chemical industry.

Finally, let me use this opportunity to express my gratitude to all military and civilian authorities of the United Kingdom involved in the two joint practice challenge inspections for their outstanding co-operation and support in the preparation and conduct of these exercises.

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): As this is the first time I take the floor under your presidency, may I begin by congratulating you on your accession to the Chair of our Conference? We are all benefiting from the wise leadership you are giving us.

The distinguished Ambassador of Germany has just introduced a report on two joint chemical weapons trial challenge inspections held by Germany and the United Kingdom (CD/1056). Ambassador von Wagner has already described this collaborative work in some detail. I would only make two comments.

First I would emphasize the excellent co-operation between the officials, German and British, who carried out the two joint trials. We for our part found working together with our German colleagues gave a most valuable additional dimension to both trials.

You may recall that prior to these two joint trials, the United Kingdom had undertaken six national trial challenge inspections, and we reported on these in CD/1012. My authorities found that the experience gained in the joint German/United Kingdom trials confirmed the earlier conclusions from our own national trials as regards both the high value of challenge inspection as part of the verification process and the efficacy of managed access techniques. Ambassador von Wagner has rightly emphasized this aspect, and I endorse what he has said. Our experience in this respect seems to have been similar both to that of our German partners and to that described in the report on the joint trial challenge inspection held by Canada and the Netherlands which was tabled by the distinguished Ambassadors of those two countries on 31 January.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for her statement and for the kind words she addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Cameroon, Ambassador Ngoubeyou.

Mr. NGOUBEYOU (Cameroon) (translated from French): First of all Mr. President, I would like to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the Conference for the period from 22 January to 17 February 1991, and to thank you for giving me this opportunity to take the floor in this august assembly.

As a result of the remarkable improvement in relations between Washington and Moscow, the sudden acceleration of history in Central and Eastern Europe, the glimmers of hope in Asia and elsewhere, despite the Gulf conflict, and the revival of multilateralism, the Conference is being held this year in an exceptional international climate. This improvement in the international

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climate, which is founded on the political will of all States and the taking into account of the legitimate interests of each group of States, should enable the international community, and in particular the Conference on Disarmament, to undertake a thorough examination of the various aspects of the issue of disarmament, at a time when the goals, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations call our attention to our duty to save future generations from the scourge of war.

Cameroon, which welcomes the positive and encouraging course of the negotiations between the two super-Powers, as well as the important agreements recently concluded in Paris to guarantee security, peace and co-operation in Europe, remains dedicated to the purposes and principles proclaimed in the Charter and attaches special importance to disarmament and the maintenance of peace. In this connection the recent measures taken by the Conference on Disarmament to improve its functioning, involving the amendment of rules 7, 9 and 28 of the rules of procedure, should be noted with satisfaction. We are also gratified by the fact that at its first plenary in 1991 the Conference decided, in response to the wishes of the overwhelming majority of States, to continue consideration of the item concerning its improved and effective functioning and to report on the matter to the General Assembly of the United Nations at its forty-sixth session. It is important for the Conference on Disarmament, which remains the international community's sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations, to acquire the means to implement its mandate effectively, intensify its work and adopt concrete measures on specific priority disarmament issues which have been on its agenda for years, in accordance with the Programme of Action set out in section III of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly. The Conference should also reflect the present composition of the international community so that all the elements in it are able to make their contribution to the cause of peace. In accordance with paragraphs 14 and 15 of its report (CD/1039), the Conference will be intensifying its consultations with a view to taking a positive decision at this session on the expansion of the membership of the Conference by not more than four States, taking into account the need to keep a balance in its membership, and will inform the General Assembly of the United Nations of its decision at its forty-sixth session. Cameroon strongly supports the determination of the members of the Conference to settle this question of the admission of new States quickly and fairly. Likewise, we hope that participation by and contributions from non-member States in the work of the Conference will continue to be encouraged.

The question of a nuclear test ban has been on the Conference's agenda virtually since its inception. This complex issue lies at the core of the efforts being made by the international community, bearing in mind that a comprehensive test ban would put an end to the qualitative improvement of existing arsenals and help decisively to curb the nuclear arms race. Despite intensive and painstaking negotiations during the fourth NPT review conference and the PTBT Amendment Conference, no agreement was reached on a legal instrument banning all nuclear testing in all environments for all time. In view of the importance of this question in the disarmament process, its links with the question of the extension of the NPT and its relationship with the problem of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, it is important that the Conference on Disarmament, in accordance with General Assembly

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resolutions 45/49 and 45/51, should be able to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban during this session to carry forward the work begun in the Conference in 1990, focusing on substantive work on specific and interrelated test-ban issues, including the structure and scope of the future test-ban treaty as well as verification and compliance with obligations freely entered into.

Turning to chemical weapons, I should point out that the report presented by Ambassador Hyltenius, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, shows the substantial progress that has been achieved in the elaboration of the draft convention on chemical weapons. Here we would like to congratulate Ambassador Hyltenius for his tremendous contribution. The importance of such a legal instrument in formalizing the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, particularly in the light of events in the Gulf, needs no further demonstration. That is why we hope that under the enlightened guidance of Ambassador Batsanov, the Ad Hoc Committee will make every effort to settle the highly complex political and technical questions that have still to be resolved and reach agreement on the substance of this international convention which we have awaited with such impatience. The Cameroonian delegation, which will again be participating in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee this year, will make its modest contribution to the search for compromise solutions.

Here it is appropriate to stress the value of CW trial inspections such as those carried out jointly at the Canadian military base at Lahr in Germany by the Netherlands and Canada. Such trials make it possible to verify the applicability of the provisions of the protocol on inspection procedures, to initiate participants into techniques for implementing the future convention and to promote understanding among States. We hope that the Conference will be in a position to achieve concrete progress in finalizing the text of the convention on chemical weapons. Likewise, since there is no fundamental objection in the Conference to the idea of an international convention aimed at providing non-nuclear-weapon States with assurances against the use or threat of use of such weapons, even if the difficulties involved in developing a common approach are still great, Cameroon hopes that the members of the Conference will redouble their efforts to study further the different approaches that have been envisaged in order to overcome the difficulties, reach an agreement as soon as possible and conclude effective international arrangements relating to the security of the non-nuclear-weapon States.

Other important questions are on the Conference's agenda for the 1991 session. They relate in particular to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, radiological weapons and the comprehensive programme of disarmament. On all these substantive issues, to which the international community is quite rightly giving attention in the quest for general and complete disarmament under effective international control and in the promotion of peace, security and development, my delegation will be making its contribution in due course, either in the form of statements in plenary or during consultations in the ad hoc committees.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Cameroon for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia, Ambassador Loeis.

Mr. LOEIS (Indonesia): At the outset, let me join the previous speakers in paying tribute to the very important statement made by the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Ali Akbar Velayati. I am sure that his presence and his message will give more impetus to our deliberations in the Conference.

Sir, I would like to express our pleasure at seeing you, the representative of a country with which Indonesia has always had excellent relations, presiding over the Conference. I am confident that under your stewardship we shall achieve substantive progress in our work. I would like to take this opportunity to commend your distinguished predecessor, Dr. Gheorghe Chirila of Romania, for the very competent manner in which he guided us during the last part of our session last year.

I wish every success to those colleagues who have left us since I last addressed the Conference - Ambassador Ait Chaalal of Algeria, Ambassador Reese of Australia, Ambassador Kostov of Bulgaria, Ambassador Pierre Morel of France, Ambassador Sujka of Poland, Ambassador Kosin of Yugoslavia and, finally, Ambassador Peter Dietze, who was the Ambassador of the German Democratic Republic before unification. I extend a warm welcome to our new colleagues, the Ambassadors of Yugoslavia, Algeria, Australia, Bulgaria and Poland. We look forward to working in close co-operation with them in the future.

While the dramatic and unprecedented international changes which overshadowed the sessions of the Conference of last year and 1989 have been widely discussed, I venture to say that this session of the Conference is taking place during the most disturbing international event of the era since the Second World War. Never during its existence has the session of the Conference been confronted with such a human tragedy as the war in the Gulf, from which we are already hearing stories of devastation, fear and suffering. In this connection, allow me to touch upon matters which are pertinent to our deliberations at this given time, and to refer to the circumstances from the point of view of a member of the Conference from a region which has had much experience of the evils of conflicts and power rivalries. First and foremost, I believe that the Conference has been provided with a convincing indication as to the importance of the role that the Conference should play in contributing to the international endeavours towards the achievement of international peace and security, based on the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. It should not lose sight of its task, which is that of negotiating measures to halt and reverse the arms race in a multilateral sense, towards general and complete disarmament. The evidence of the devasting effects of the use of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons in the past, already great enough, is being compounded by further evidence from the present armed conflict.

I could not agree more with the Secretary-General of the United Nations that, as he said in his message a few days ago, the endeavour towards disarmament needs to be pursued at a faster pace, in a more global and

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comprehensive way, as part of a reliable and consistent system of undiminished security for all. A great number of resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on matters related to disarmament have reflected the common quest of all Members of the United Nations for lasting international peace and security through practical measures of disarmament. Indeed, the dark cloud resulting from the smoke of munitions a long way from this room should be giving us a strong signal to speed up our deliberations.

Resolution 45/49 of the United Nations General Assembly appeals to all member States of the Conference on Disarmament to "promote" the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, at the beginning of its 1991 session, with the objective of carrying out multilateral negotiations for a treaty on the complete cessation of nuclear test explosions. The General Assembly recommends that the Ad Hoc Committee should comprise two working groups dealing with the following interrelated questions: firstly the contents and scope of the treaty, and secondly compliance and verification. United Nations General Assembly resolution 45/51 also urges the Conference, inter alia, in addition to re-establishing the Ad Hoc Committee on an NTB, to take into account the progress achieved by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, including work on the routine exchange and use of wave-form data, and other relevant initiatives or experiments carried out by individual States and groups of States.

Over the years, the General Assembly has adopted numerous resolutions calling for a comprehensive test ban so as to achieve the goal of a comprehensive nuclear-weapon test-ban treaty. At the risk of being repetitive, let me restate that the preambles to the partial test-ban Treaty and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, two treaties which my country strictly adheres to, stipulate that the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons by all States in all environments for all time is a fundamental goal to be realized. The recently concluded PTBT Amendment Conference revealed certain elements which might be beneficial for the work of the Conference in pursuing the goal mentioned earlier. Considering these recent developments, the Conference is at the moment gaining momentum in its endeavours toward the achievement of a comprehensive nuclear test ban.

At the PTBT Amendment Conference, it was widely held that the Amendment Conference produced a stronger international commitment to a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Some constructive ideas were also outlined - among other things, a suggestion that the verification proposals presented to the Amendment Conference, including the draft protocol proposed by the co-sponsors of the Amendment Conference, should be transmitted to the Conference on Disarmament for further consideration. For the benefit of our deliberations at this forum this suggestion should be given adequate consideration.

Confidence in the technical aspects of verification as a determining factor which can motivate the cessation of nuclear weapon testing by nuclear-weapon States is of great significance, as was pointed out by a number of delegations during the Amendment Conference. There were also many convincing arguments to the effect that the available techniques of verification, both national and international, are sufficient to sustain a comprehensive test-ban treaty. It was pointed out at the Amendment Conference

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that scientific evidence proves sufficient for a nuclear test ban verification system, taking advantage of currently available technological and scientific means.

A large number of delegations at the Amendment Conference suggested that seismic monitoring has a vital role to play in the verification system of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. There was, however, widespread recognition that seismic monitoring may not be adequate to instil confidence in a comprehensive test-ban treaty. In this regard, some delegations welcomed the various proposals made in the Amendment Conference concerning the monitoring of airborne radiation, satellite surveillance and on-site inspection, which all merit further consideration. The importance of the work being undertaken by the Group of Scientific Experts on seismic events was also emphasized during the Amendment Conference.

As for the institutional aspect of the envisaged comprehensive nuclear test-ban régime, some suggested at the Amendment Conference that the proposal concerning verification should be presented to the Conference on Disarmament so that it might be further elaborated. From the perspective of the work of the Conference on Disarmament, such a proposal is encouraging. It provides evidence that the Conference on Disarmament, and especially its Group of Scientific Experts, is considered by States parties to the Treaty as worthy to deal with the question of verification of the nuclear test ban. It is only natural therefore that the Conference on Disarmament should resume and increase the substantive work it initiated last year in the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban with renewed determination and vigour. Since the question of a nuclear test ban is of paramount importance for the Conference to deal with, my delegation would wish the Conference to have an opportunity to assess the work undertaken at the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban by the end of the Conference's session.

In touching upon the elaboration of the comprehensive nuclear test-ban régime, I wish to underline one of the most crucial points made by the Group of 21 during last year's session of the Conference. It was stressed that such a comprehensive nuclear test-ban régime should be non-discriminatory and comprehensive in character so as to attract universal adherence. It should include a verification system that is universal in its application and non-discriminatory in its nature, and guarantees equal access to all States. My delegation is of the belief that a test-ban régime which confers exclusive rights on any States to continue to carry out nuclear testing would inevitably be met with suspicion and mistrust by others which are not accorded equal rights.

Referring to item 4 of our agenda, let me begin by saying that my delegation's basic position was well reflected in the statement of the distinguished delegate of Peru on behalf of the Group of 21 a few days ago. The future convention, while safeguarding civilian chemical industry and promoting international co-operation in the field of peaceful uses of chemicals, must in the first place be designed to achieve the total destruction of existing arsenals and outlaw the use of these abhorrent weapons. Given the long-standing loathing of these weapons by the world community, which is now increased by the threat of the possible use of these

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weapons on the battlefield during the present war, the Conference now faces the critical historic task of bringing about a treaty banning the use, possession, production and development of these weapons.

There are some issues left to be solved in order to conclude the convention. The main task at the current session of the Conference, as far as chemical weapons are concerned, is that of finding solutions in principle to those few issues where there is as yet no agreement, mainly the question of universal adherence. For this purpose the future convention must provide for systematic and total destruction of all chemical weapons within a specific period. The legitimate concern for the security of non-possessor States should be addressed in a way which ensures that the implementation of the convention will not create any new imbalance which might undermine their security concerns. Those States which do not possess or intend to possess chemical weapons for their military and defence purposes, which I believe comprises the majority of States in the globe, should not be in the position of being caught off guard and finding that, at the end of the destruction period, certain States parties are allowed to retain their chemical weapons stocks. My delegation will find it difficult to support a draft convention which permits the existence of these weapons. The political cost of protesting at a later stage will be too high for a country like mine, which has so far scrupulously observed its obligations under any treaty relating to disarmament.

Indonesia has consistently supported the role played by the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and security at regional as well as global levels. For that reason, the Government of the Republic of Indonesia hosted the United Nations Regional Disarmament Workshop for Asia and the Pacific in Bandung from 28 January to 1 February 1991. The convening of the workshop, in co-operation with the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs, took place under the mandate of United Nations General Assembly resolution 40/151 H. The programme for this workshop covered a wide range of issues which are of deep concern to the entire world. These include peace and security in Asia and the Pacific, global disarmament to strengthen the régime of the non-proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, the chemical weapons convention, regional disarmament efforts and a proposal to strengthen the non-proliferation régime and conflict resolution in the Asia-Pacific region. I am hopeful that the results of these deliberations will contribute substantially to the region's comprehension of these issues, and more specifically that it will also contribute to the implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolution 40/151 H concerning the promotion of regional disarmament training and advisory services.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Indonesia for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Peru, Ambassador de Rivero.

Mr. de RIVERO (Peru) (translated from Spanish): My delegation has asked to take the floor this morning in order to refer to agenda item 1, Nuclear test ban. According to the final declaration of the first session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament, this item is of the highest priority, and that has been my country's view for many years. This Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating forum on

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disarmament, has the mandate from the international community to carry out concrete and substantive negotiations. On many occasions in this very body Peru has restated the urgent need to initiate negotiations with a view to bringing about, in the shortest possible time, a complete nuclear test ban valid for all environments and all forms. The fact that to date the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to satisfy this just demand, which is a response to the democratic outcry of the overwhelming majority of the countries of the world and the man in the street, indisputably calls into question the binding nature of this sole multilateral negotiating forum which in 1978 received by consensus a clear and emphatic mandate from the United Nations General Assembly to negotiate agreements in the area of disarmament on matters of particular importance for the cessation of the nuclear arms race.

There is no valid reason to justify the indefinite postponement of the start of negotiations. Nor are member States of the Conference on Disarmament in a position to sacrifice deep-seated positions of principle, based on democratic sentiments of their peoples, while awaiting the bon vouloir of one or two delegations. Starting negotiations on a CTBT does not necessarily oblige member States of the Conference on Disarmament to conclude a treaty in six months or a year. As in the area of chemical weapons, where nobody doubts the good faith of the States that are represented here, negotiations on a CTBT could very well take a few years to reconcile positions that are still divergent as regards the structure and scope of the future CTBT. Nevertheless, my delegation is concerned that a degree of intolerance and inflexibility persists with regard to a matter that would in no way tie the hands of member States, but does definitely jeopardize the realization of an aspiration that is based on international law and the demands of the peoples of other countries and the obligations incumbent on members of the Conference on Disarmament.

In 1990, Peru joined the last-minute consensus that allowed the Ad Hoc Committee on agenda item 1, Nuclear test ban, to be established. On that occasion my delegation, along with the distinguished delegations of the Group of 21, was practically forced to make a major concession: it left in abeyance its position contained in document CD/829, which was the result of a mature and responsible decision by the group on the comprehensive nuclear test ban. This made it possible for a preliminary exchange of views to take place under the chairmanship of the distinguished Ambassador Donowaki, which had the virtue of bringing the discussions up to date. At the same time consultations on the work programme were carried out as the best way to facilitate matters for this year. At the end of the exercise my delegation was amongst those that were surprised at the reluctance of one group to include in the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee an unequivocal reference to its re-establishment at the beginning of the 1991 session. So we had to agree to a report that in the end subordinated the fate of the Ad Hoc Committee to the outcome of the fourth NPT review conference and the PTBT Amendment Conference. Yet again the Group of 21 was presented with a fait accompli and faced, in addition to the immediate negotiation of a CTBT, the problem of the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee.

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During the fourth NPT review conference an offer was made for the immediate re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee as a way of avoiding a commitment to begin immediate negotiations on a CTBT. And the review conference was unable to adopt a final declaration precisely for that reason. A similar situation was seen in the PTBT Amendment Conference, which was unable to find a formula which would enable us to respond to the justified expectations of the non-nuclear-weapon States. So matters continue, and we find ourselves in this Conference virtually obliged not to negotiate, lacking any alternative but to repeat the exercise of 1982 and 1983, with the difference that in 1995 - that is to say, very soon - the States parties to the NPT will have to take a decision on the number of years that the Treaty should continue in force. This year we will have to decide at the forthcoming General Assembly on the date when the work of the Preparatory Committee for the NPT extension conference should start. And it is precisely because of these time constraints that the Conference on Disarmament must make an exceptional effort to enable immediate negotiations to take place.

As I have already said, negotiating does not mean concluding a treaty immediately. Negotiating - a negotiating mandate - is first and foremost a political gesture to reaffirm good faith in complying with commitments entered into. When, in article I, paragraph 3, of the Treaty on the Limitation of Underground Nuclear Weapon Tests, the United States and the Soviet Union undertook to continue their negotiations with a view toward achieving a solution to the problem of the cessation of all underground nuclear weapon tests, it is clear that they did not rule out negotiations in the multilateral arena, and it is the unwillingness to start such negotiations that is now untenable, even though the cessation of nuclear tests is still considered a longer-term objective.

This morning my delegation cannot but place on record its dissatisfaction at the serious setbacks facing the Conference on Disarmament in carrying out the mandate with regard to agenda item 1. In view of the important deadlines that we have ahead of us in the next few years, my delegation is prepared for this year, and for this year alone, to join the consensus regading the mandate adopted last year. However, my delegation believes that this situation involving deliberations but no negotiations on an item of the highest priority cannot be perpetuated in the future. It will be necessary to provide for a start to negotiations on a CTBT at the very latest by next year, in 1992, if this Conference wishes to form part of a new international order and to keep its status as the sole multilateral negotiating forum.

In this life everything has an end and nothing, absolutely nothing, can remain unchangeable indefinitely.

The PRESIDENT: That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other representative wish to take the floor?

As I announced at the opening of this plenary meeting, I shall now put before the Conference for action a number of decisions relating to organizational arrangements under agenda items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. We shall proceed in the order in which the items appear on our agenda. Accordingly, we shall begin with agenda item 1, entitled "Nuclear test ban". In that connection, the secretariat has circulated today a draft decision on the

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re-establishment of an ad hoc Committee to deal with that item. The draft decision appears in document CD/WP.403. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the draft decision.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I now wish to invite the Conference to appoint the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee. I am informed that there is consensus on the appointment of Ambassador Indrajit Singh Chadha of India as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee. Shall I take it that the Conference so decides?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I extend to Ambassador Chadha, on behalf of the Conference, our congratulations on his appointment to the important post of Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee and wish him every success in discharging his heavy responsibilities.

In connection with the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on item 1, I wish to recall that Ambassador Donowaki of Japan very kindly made himself available to help in the process of informal consultations on the programme of work of the Committee. I am grateful for the assistance provided by Ambassador Donowaki in that respect and I am sure that the work he performed on that subject will be very helpful to the incoming Chairman.

I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil, who will speak as Co-ordinator of the Group of 21 on this item.

Mr. RICUPERO (Brazil): The conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is the most urgent item on the agenda of this Conference and is long overdue. This Conference, as the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, has the primary role in negotiations to achieve that objective. The need for a nuclear test-ban treaty has been repeatedly emphasized in numerous documents adopted unanimously by the United Nations, including the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. As a significant contribution to the aim of halting and reversing the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, the Group of 21 has consistently advocated and has continued to attach the highest priority to a nuclear test ban.

In a spirit of compromise and flexibility, and in order to facilitate the setting up of an ad hoc committee on item 1 in the Conference on Disarmament, the Group of 21 did not object to document CD/863 being taken as the basis for the mandate of the Committee when it was established late in the 1990 session of the CD. This acceptance was without prejudice to its continuing preference for the mandate contained in document CD/829.

We accept that the Ad Hoc Committee will now be able to resume its work. Its mandate, however, continues to be much below the expectations of the Group of 21. The Group exceptionally accepts the present mandate, and such acceptance does not imply that the Ad Hoc Committee should be allowed to work indefinitely on the same basis. The Group believes that a clear negotiating

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mandate is necessary to ensure the conclusion of a nuclear test-ban treaty which will play a fundamental role in contributing to the cause of disarmament.

It should be recalled that the achievement of a nuclear test-ban treaty was envisaged in the preamble to the partial test-ban treaty of 1963, which embodied the objective of continuing negotiations "to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time".

The Group of 21 would like to put on record that it accepts the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban on the basis of last year's mandate only for this year, in order to allow it to begin its work as soon as possible. It does so on the understanding that the results of the Committee's work and its mandate will be reviewed at the end of our session.

In recognizing the efforts of Ambassador Donowaki of Japan, we should like to congratulate Ambassador Chadha of India on his election to chair the Ad Hoc Committee this year.

Mr. CHADHA (India): Mr. President, I would like to begin by extending to you, on behalf of my delegation, our warmest felicitations on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament during a crucial phase of its work, and our best wishes for success in the task that lies ahead. I would also like to join earlier speakers in thanking His Excellency the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the thought-provoking address which we were privileged to hear this morning.

I am indeed greatly honoured by the trust and confidence which has been reposed in me by electing me as the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on agenda item 1, "Nuclear test ban". It will be my endeavour to carry forward the task so ably initiated by Ambassador Donowaki last year, to the best of my ability; and I am confident that in doing so I can count on the support and co-operation of the members of the CD as well as of the secretariat. I would like to take this opportunity to pay a warm tribute to Ambassador Donowaki for the outstanding leadership he provided during the formative stages of the work of the Committee upon its re-establishment last year.

The task which has been assigned to this Committee is of great importance and, at the same time, of enormous complexity with far-reaching political implications. This is abundantly clear from the fact that it took us so long to agree upon the new mandate of the Committee, which was able to resume its work after a long gap of seven years. That we were eventually able to resolve our differences bears testimony not only to the importance which the members of the CD attach at the present juncture of international relations to the resumption of work in this area, but also to their willingness to accommodate the points of view of one another. It is my earnest hope that the same spirit of compromise, co-operation and flexibility which characterized the negotiations on the mandate will continue to prevail in the future and will facilitate the accomplishment of our task.

In reviving this Committee last year, we reaffirmed our commitment to the goal of a comprehensive test ban. The attainment of this goal will call for dedicated work and renewed determination to overcome the obstacles which still

(Mr. Chadha, India)

remain. Our deliberations will be followed with considerable interest by all those who are dedicated to the cause of disarmament and peace; and I hope that we shall not disappoint them.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of India for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. Does any other member wish to take the floor at this stage? I see none.

We shall now proceed to consider agenda items 2 and 3. As I informed you at our last plenary meeting, consensus has been reached on an organizational arrangement to deal with these agenda items. I shall now follow a procedure identical to that used last year to formalize the consensus. I therefore put before the Conference for decision the following text:

> "The Conference on Disarmament decides that informal meetings be held during its 1991 session on the substance of agenda items 2, 'Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament', and 3, 'Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters', and that the discussions at those informal meetings be duly reflected in the annual report of the Conference to the General Assembly of the United Nations."

If there is no objection, I shall consider that the Conference adopts the text that I have just read out.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I should like now to turn to another subject relating to the forthcoming informal meetings. Under the rules of procedure, the President of the Conference has the responsibility, in accordance with the normal duties of any presiding officer, to ensure that discussions at plenary or informal meetings are conducted in an orderly way. Accordingly, I wish to inform you that I have myself taken the initative of preparing a list of topics for the prupose of facilitating a structured discussion at informal meetings on the substance of agenda items 2 and 3. That list is my own and therefore does not bind any delegation. Furthermore, it is understood that members wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the agenda items, as is the normal practice of the Conference. I shall now read out that list of topics:

Firstly, for agenda item 2:

Implementation of paragraph 50 of the Final Document of SSOD-I in the light of the trends in international relations

Evaluation of the dynamics of the nuclear arms race in the light of recent international developments

The nuclear arms race in all its qualitative aspects, and related matters

Existing international instruments concerning the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament

(The President)

The interrelation between bilateral and multilateral consideration of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament; participation in negotiations for the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament; prerequisites for the participation of all nuclear-weapon States in nuclear disarmament; role of the Conference on Disarmament

Security concepts relating to nuclear weapons in view of recent developments and in the light of the global consequences of existing and envisaged disarmament and arms limitation agreements

The role of nuclear deterrence in keeping the peace for 40 years: the need to proceed carefully and gradually in reducing reliance on nuclear deterrence

Principles governing nuclear disarmament

Proposals on stages and measures of nuclear disarmament

Cessation of the production of fissionable matterial for weapons purposes, and measures against the reuse for weapons purposes of fissionable material released by disarmament steps

Naval nuclear armaments and disarmament

Collateral measures with the aim of consolidating and continuing the ongoing process of nuclear disarmament:

Non-proliferation of missiles and other means of delivery of nuclear weapons, as well as their technology

Confidence-building measures promoting nuclear disarmament

Verification in relation to the purposes, scope and nature of agreements

Existing proposals.

Secondly, for agenda item 3:

The impossibility of separating the problems of preventing nuclear war and preventing any war

Measures to exclude the use of nuclear weapons, inter alia:

Paragraph 58 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly (code of peaceful conduct that would preclude the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons)

International convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances (text annexed to General Assembly resolution 43/76 E of 7 December 1988)

Prohibition in a legally binding form of the use of nuclear weapons

(The President)

Measures for confidence-building and crisis prevention:

Measures to enhance confidence and increase openness with regard to military activities, including a multilateral agreement on the prevention of incidents on the high seas

Measures to prevent accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons and to avoid and manage crisis situations, including the establishment of multilateral nuclear alert and crisis control centres

Measures to facilitate the international verification of compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements

Criteria and parameters for defensive military postures; military strategies and doctrines; prevention of surprise attacks

New trends in weapons technology and their impact on security and disarmament efforts.

This is the list of topics that I have prepared on my own responsibility.

I now give the floor to the representative of India, Ambassador Chadha, as Co-ordinator of the Group of 21 on item 2.

Mr. CHADHA (India): The significance which the Group of 21 attaches to agenda item 2 - Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament - is well known, and its views are already reflected in documents CD/64, CD/116, CD/180, CD/526 and CD/819. In keeping with its consistent position, the Group of 21 presented the draft mandate contained in CD/819/Rev.1 on 27 July 1989. It is a mandate that reflects the two crucial aspects of this issue - the urgency that the issue demands and the need to deal with it in the multilateral negotiating framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

Resolution 45/62 C adopted at the forty-fifth United Nations General Assembly session requests the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee at the beginning of its 1991 session on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament with an adequate mandate in order to allow a structured and practical analysis of how the Conference can best contribute to progress on this urgent matter. Resolution 45/59 D, also adopted at the forty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, calls upon all nuclear-weapon States to agree, through a joint declaration, to a comprehensive nuclear arms freeze, which would embrace, besides a comprehensive test ban on nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles, the complete cessation of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes under appropriate and effective measures and procedures for verification. The General Assembly, through these widely supported resolutions, has requested the Conference on Disarmament to submit a report to its forty-sixth session on the implementation of these resolutions. The Group of 21 regrets that despite the preliminary work carried out on the subject during previous years, it has still not been found possible to set up an ad hoc committee on this item.

(Mr. Chadha, India)

In keeping with the discussions that took place on this item in previous years, and as reflected in the report of the CD contained in document CD/1039, the Group of 21 is convinced that the need for urgent multilateral action on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, leading to the adoption of concrete measures, has been amply demonstrated. In its opinion, multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament have long been overdue. It takes note of the progress achieved in the bilateral negotiations in the nuclear field and looks forward to further reductions in strategic nuclear arsenals in the context of the START process. However, bilateral negotiations can never replace or nullify the genuine multilateral search for universally applicable nuclear disarmament measures. All nations have a vital interest in negotiations on nuclear disarmament. The existence of nuclear weapons and their quantitative and qualitative development directly and fundamentally jeopardize the vital security interests of both nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States alike. It is an accepted fact that nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and the survival of civilization.

The present international situation and the easing of tensions between East and West lends further credence to the long-standing demand of an overwhelming majority of the world community to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race in all its aspects, and to adopt urgent measures for nuclear disarmament through a time-bound programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The accumulation of nuclear weaponry constitutes a threat to the very security that it seeks to protect. In the nuclear age, the only valid doctrine is the achievement of collective security through nuclear disarmament. As long as doctrines of nuclear deterrence are persisted with, a nuclear arms race which leads to greater insecurity and instability in international relations cannot be halted and reversed. Moreover, such doctrines, which in the ultimate analysis are predicated upon a willingness to use nuclear weapons, cannot be the basis for preventing the outbreak of a nuclear war, a war which would affect participants and innocent bystanders alike. The Group wishes to reiterate the validity of General Assembly resolution 1653 (XVI) of 1961, which declared, inter alia, that the use of nuclear weapons would be contrary to the laws of humanity and a crime against civilization.

In the task of achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament, the nuclear-weapon States bear a special responsibility. In keeping with respect for the security concerns of non-nuclear States, all nuclear-weapon States must accept the obligation to take positive and practical steps towards the adoption and implementation of concrete measures towards nuclear disarmament.

The realization that a nuclear war cannot be won and must not be fought is a significant step forward, which must be translated into practical steps. Paragraph 50 of the Final Document of SSOD-I sets out guidelines for the CD to provide an effective and complementary process in the multilateral framework. The Group of 21 remains firmly committed to the implementation of the provisions of this paragraph and believes that the establishment of an ad hoc committee in the CD provides the best means to achieve this objective. The Group of 21 stresses that its willingness to accept the format of the informal plenary to discuss this agenda item this year in no way prejudices

(Mr. Chadha, India)

its principled stand reflected in CD/64, CD/116, CD/180, CD/526, CD/819 and CD/819/Rev.1. The Group expects substantial movement on the issue of setting up an ad hoc committee on this agenda item next year, in keeping with the importance of the subject within the global disarmament agenda.

The PRESIDENT: I now give the floor to the representative of Kenya, Ambassador Ogada, as Co-ordinator for the Group of 21 on item 3.

Mr. OGADA (Kenya): Mr. President, as this is the first time I have taken the floor during your presidency, may I congratulate you for the very effective and efficient manner in which you have guided the work of the Conference since the commencement of its 1991 session? As the same time, my delegation would also like to thank His Excellency Dr. Velayati, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, for his illuminating statement on the Gulf crisis.

I have asked for the floor today to make a statement on behalf of the Group of 21 with regard to agenda item 3, "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters".

The Group of 21 wishes to express its regret at the inability of the Conference on Disarmament to set up an ad hoc committee on agenda item 3. The Group has shown itself ready to exchange views on this subject, here or in the General Assembly. But some delegations have not agreed with this, as their priorities seem to be different.

I do not need to emphasize the importance that the Group of 21 attaches to this item. The Group believes that the greatest peril facing the world is the threat of destruction from a nuclear war, and that consequently the removal of this threat is most acute and urgent. Nuclear-weapon States possess the primary responsibility for avoiding nuclear war, but all nations have a vital interest in the negotiation of measures for prevention of nuclear war, in view of the catastrophic consequences that such a war would have for mankind. As far back as 1961, General Assembly resolution 1653 (XVI) declared that the use of nuclear weapons, besides being a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, would be against the laws of humanity and a crime against civilization. Keeping this in view the Belgrade Declaration, adopted in September 1989 at the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, emphasized the extreme urgency of achieving nuclear disarmament through the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and "stressed the need for the conclusion of an international agreement prohibiting all use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances".

It is matter of concern for all delegations present here that no progress has been possible on this item since its introduction as a separate item on the CD's agenda in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/183 G. During these years the arms race has accelerated, leading to the expansion of nuclear weapon stockpiles and the introduction of still more lethal warheads into them.

The United Nations General Assembly has repeatedly requested the Conference on Disarmament to undertake, as a matter of the highest priority, negotiations with a view to achieving agreement on appropriate and practical

(Mr. Ogada, Kenya)

measures for the prevention of nuclear war and to establish for that purpose an ad hoc committee on this subject. During the 1990 session of the General Assembly there were two resolutions on this subject which were adopted by overwhelming majorities. One of these resolutions, 45/59 B on a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, reiterated the call to the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations, as a matter of priority, in order to reach agreement on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances, taking as a basis for its work the draft convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons annexed to the resolution.

In view of the irreversible consequences of a nuclear war, it is clear that conventional wars cannot under any circumstances be equated with nuclear war, since nuclear weapons are weapons of mass destruction. In this context, invoking the Charter to justify the use of nuclear weapons in the exercise of the right to self-defence is completely unjustifiable. The Group of 21 remains convinced that the shortest way to remove the danger of nuclear war lies in the elimination of nuclear weapons, and that pending the achievement of nuclear disarmament, the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons should be prohibited. It has welcomed the declaration by then President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev in November 1985 that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought", as also its reconfirmation in the joint statements issued subsequently. Now is the time to translate this will into a binding commitment.

The Group of 21 remains committed to the position expressed in CD/515/Rev.5 of 27 July 1989 for the establishment of an ad hoc committee that will permit thcrough consideration of all aspects - legal, political, technical and military - of all the proposals before the Conference. It believes that such consideration will not only contribute to better understanding of the subject but also pave the way for negotations for an agreement on the prevention of nuclear war. Such an objective cannot be achieved only through discussions in the plenary or informal meetings. The Group is disappointed, therefore, that despite the urgency accorded to this subject and the flexibility it has displayed, the Conference on Disarmament is not able to discharge its own mandate, which is reflected in paragraph 120 of the Final Document of SSOD-I. However, the Group of 21 is prepared to start consideration of this item in informal plenary meetings in the hope that the importance of the matter will lead to a rethinking on the part of those who have expressed reservations on the mandate proposed by the Group of 21.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Kenya for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. Are there any further comments in connection with items 2 and 3? It seems not.

I wish to inform you that the informal meetings referred to will be devoted alternately to agenda item 2 and agenda item 3. We shall hold the first informal meeting on Thursday, 21 February, immediately after the plenary meeting on that date. As a rule, we shall deal with one agenda item per week, on the understanding that if for any reason we have no time to listen to all speakers listed for a particular day, we shall continue at the end of the following plenary meeting. Members wishing to place their names on the list in advance may do so, but this is not necessary.

(The President)

I should like now to turn to agenda item 4. The secretariat has also circulated today a draft decision which is contained in document CD/WP.401, concerning the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. I now put document CD/WP.401 before the Conference for decision. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the draft decision.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I now turn to the chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee. I understand that there is consensus on the appointment of Minister Serguei Batsanov of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee. I invite you to formalize that decision.

It was do decided.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to extend congratulations to Minister Batsanov on behalf of the Conference on his appointment to the chairmanship of that subsidiary body. I further wish him a successful tenure of office in the negotations on one of the priority items on our agenda.

I now give the floor to the representative of Peru, as Co-ordinator for the Group of 21 on item 4.

Mr. CALDERON (Peru) (translated from Spanish): On behalf of the Group of 21, I would like to make the following statement with regard to the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. With your permission, Mr. President, I shall read out the statement in English.

(continued in English)

"On 7 February 1991 the Group of 21 made a statement with regard to the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. It set forth its position in relation to the necessity of including the question of the total prohibition of use of chemical weapons in the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons that we have just re-established. The Group of 21 has joined the consensus this morning on the draft mandate proposed in order to ensure the prompt resumption of the important work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. However, we deeply regret that the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons does not include specific reference to the prohibition of use of chemical weapons. The Group of 21 continues to believe that, as the draft convention covers the issue of the prohibition of use, this should also be clearly reflected in the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee."

Mr. ANTYUKHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. President, since the delegation of the USSR is taking the floor for the first time at today's session of the Conference on Disarmament, we would like at the outset to welcome you most sincerely to your present responsible post. The delegation of the USSR has been aquainted with you for a long time now as we have worked together in the field of multilateral disarmament, and in the time that has elapsed since the opening of the present session, we have had the opportunity to see for ourselves once again the skilful, purposeful and tactful way you have been steering the work of the

(Mr. Antyukhin, USSR)

Conference. I would like to assure you that the Soviet delegation will fully support you in your work. At the same time, we would like to welcome the new heads of delegation - Ambassadors A. Semichi, P. O'Sullivan, T. Ditchev, T. Tóth, D.E. Baljinnyam and N. Calovski. We wish them every success in performing their responsible tasks. We would also ask the delegations of Algeria, Australia, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, France and Yugoslavia to convey our very best wishes to Ambassadors M.A. Chaalal, D. Reese, I. Varga, L. Bayart, B. Sujka, G. Chirila, P. Morel and M. Kosin, who have returned home.

In connection with the decision just adopted by the Conference, to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and appoint the head of the Soviet delegation, S.B. Batsanov, as Chairman of the Committee for the coming year, the Soviet delegation would like to express its deepest gratitude to all delegations for the great confidence that they have placed in us.

S.B. Batsanov has asked me to convey to you that he regards this appointment first and foremost as a recognition of the role which the Soviet Union is playing both in the talks aimed at the complete prohibition of chemical weapons and in the efforts being made by the international community in other fields of arms limitation and disarmament. He has asked me to assure all the distinguished representatives that he will make every effort to ensure that 1991 is a year of substantial progress towards a decision on what we view as one of the most urgent items on the agenda of the Conference - saving mankind from the threat of chemical warfare. The urgency of this task is confirmed by the dramatic events which are now occurring in the Persian Gulf region. The delegation of the USSR listened carefully to the substantive statement made by the distinguished Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati. It contains a number of points which all of us should give serious thought to. Furthermore, the war in the Gulf, as we see it, clearly demonstrates that we are seriously behind schedule in drafting a comprehensive convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. In these circumstances it is obvious that all of us should once again take a critical look at our fundamental attitude to the convention and take the necessary political decisions to ensure full and unreserved support for the future convention on the part of all participants in the negotiations. This is the guarantee of success.

Unfortunately, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, S.B. Batsanov, will be away from Geneva until Monday for previously planned consultations. He asked me to say on his behalf that in order to perform effectively the functions of Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, he intends to co-operate extensively with all interested delegations participating in the talks both as members of the Conference and as non-members. The goal of such co-operation, as he sees it, is to try to lay the foundations which on the one hand will contribute to the achievement of a generally acceptable compromise on outstanding issues connected with the draft convention, reflecting a balance between the interests of the different parties in the negotiations, and on the other hand will guarantee the effectiveness and universality of the future convention.

(Mr. Antyukhin, USSR)

We feel bound to point out that the circumstances which helped to bring the negotiations to the very significant stage they have now reached did not come about by accident. A considerable personal contribution was made here by the distinguished representatives of States who have served as previous chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. In this connection, I would like to refer in particular to the last Chairman, the Ambassador of Sweden, Ambassador C.-M. Hyltenius, whose pragmatism, openness, intuition and, when necessary, stubbornness, played a substantial role during the 1990 session of the Ad Hoc Committee in the achievement of important results on the basis of which we now have to make the last breakthrough to the signing of the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

I would also like to inform you that the representative of the USSR to the Conference on Disarmament has received instructions from his Government to the effect that, if elected Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, he should actively promote negotiations, devoting special attention to finding solutions on key political issues leading to the completion of work on the multilateral convention.

In conclusion, S.B. Batsanov has asked me to inform the distinguished delegates that with the agreement of the secretariat of the Conference, the first meting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons will be held next Tuesday, 19 February at 3 p.m. in room V.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. Does any other member wish to speak on the decision just adopted? I see none.

We shall now deal with agenda item 5. The secretariat has distributed document CD/WP.402, containing a draft mandate for a re-established Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. I now intend to put the proposed draft mandate before the Conference for action. If there is no objection, I shall consider that the Conference decides to adopt the draft mandate.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I now turn to the appointment of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee. I am informed that consensus exists on the appointment of Ambassador García Moritán of Argentina as Chairman of that Committee. May I therefore proceed to register that decision?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the Conference, I congratulate Ambassador García Moritán on his appointment as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee under agenda item 5. I extend to him our best wishes for success in discharging the important responsibilities for which he has now been appointed.

I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden, Ambassador Hyltenius, as Co-ordinator for the Group of 21 on item 5.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): I should like to make the following statement on behalf of the Group of 21 in connection with the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.

On 4 December 1990, the United Nations General Assembly, by an overwhelming majority and only one dissenting vote, adopted resolution 45/55 A on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The resolution reiterates that the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. It requests the Conferenoe on Disarmament to consider this question as a matter of priority. It also requests the Conference on Disarmament to intensify its consideration of the question of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, building upon areas of convergence and taking into account relevant proposals and initiatives.

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space has, over the years, accorded extensive consideration to several issues that have been before it. It has already examined and identified the need to reinforce the legal régime applicable to outer space, as well as the need for strict compliance with existing agreements. It has also considered further measures and the need to hold appropriate international negotiations in accordance with the spirit of the outer space Treaty. In this context the Group of 21 wishes to recall the large number of proposals from all groups introduced in the Conference on Disarmament since the inception of the work of its Ad Hoc Committee in 1985, as demonstrated in documents CD/908/Rev.1 and CD/OS/WP.28/Rev.1. In particular, several of them are, in the view of the Group of 21, ready for in-depth and more structured treatment as they have gathered a substantial degree of support among the majority of the members of the Committee.

The Group of 21 has therefore proposed that this year the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space should have a negotiating mandate. The Committee should thus, in the view of the Group, focus on concrete proposals to prevent an arms race in outer space, and continue to build upon areas of convergence with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. To the regret of the Group of 21, however, it has not been possible to improve adequately the mandate of previous years, due to the reluctance of some delegations to accept such a change.

In order to facilitate the speedy resumption of work, the Group of 21 has decided to go along with the same mandate as before. This is a renewed demonstration of the flexibility and goodwill of the Group. It is our hope that other delegations will respond constructively to this attitude and agree to a more focused approach to relevant issues, so that we can move forward in areas where there are prospects for agreement. The Group holds that any delay of the work of the Committee should be avoided, given the urgent need to address this important agenda item. The Group of 21 is of the opinion that the Ad Hoc Committee should therefore start work immediately in order to achieve progress and attain positive results, and expects substantial movement on the mandate issue in the near future.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

Before concluding, I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador García Moritán of Argentina on his appointment as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. His experience and diplomatic skills guarantee that the Committee will be in very competent hands, and I am convinced that it will make substantive progress under his guidance.

The PRESIDENT: I now give the floor to the representative of France as Co-ordinator of the Western Group on this item.

Mr. BESANCENOT (France) (translated from French): Mr. President, this is the first time that I have had the honour of taking the floor in this forum, and therefore I would like at the outset to congratulate you on my delegation's behalf on the manner in which you have acted as President of our Conference during these first important four weeks of the annual session.

On behalf of the Group of Western Countries I would like to express our satisfaction at the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, and the Conference's adoption of the same mandate for the Committee as in the past. A reading of the Ad Hoc Committee's report is sufficient to persuade one that the Committee must continue in-depth analysis of all questions relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, in order to reconcile positions on basic concepts, which is essential in order to envisage negotiations on measures in this area. Experience has shown that the present mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee was sufficiently broad and flexible to enable all interested delegations to make their contribution to this common quest, including the consideration of new proposals. We would like to thank the other groups and other members of the Conference for their efforts which led to the adoption of this decision. We hope that this sense of realism will enable the Committee to embark on its substantive work without further delay. Lastly, I would like to congratulate His Excellency Mr. García Moritán, the representative of Argentina, on his election as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee. Both his diplomatic skills and his country's well-known interest in this agenda item make us confident in the prospects for this session.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of France for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina, Ambassador Moritán.

Mr. GARCIA MORITAN (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): In this last stage of your presidency, I would like to express my delegation's appreciation to you for the important task that you have performed at the start of the 1991 session of the Conference on Disarmament. The decisions adopted this morning offer a clear demonstration of your diplomatic skills and the effort made to get our work off to a good start. In that context I wish to express appreciation for the confidence placed in my delegation through the appointment to lead the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, and also to thank those who congratulated me. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Shannon of Canada for the work done in 1990 as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, and the important support received from the secretariat during his term of office.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. Does any other member wish to refer to the decision that we have just taken? I now give the floor to the representative of China, Ambassador Hou Zhitong.

Mr. HOU (China) (translated from Chinese): I wish to say a few words after having listened to many interesting statements today. I shall be very brief.

I am very happy to speak for the first time this year at the plenary of the Conference on Disarmament. First of all, please allow me on behalf of the Chinese delegation to extend our congratulations to you, as the distinguished representative of friendly Sri Lanka, on being the first President of the session, and on the excellent way you have accomplished the important task of starting the session. I would also like to take this opportunity to pay our tribute to Ambassador Komatina, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, and Ambassador Berasategui, Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference.

We listened with great interest to the statement by His Excellency Mr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Since last August the heads of a number of delegations have changed. I take this opportunity to warmly welcome among us the new ambassadors, Ambassador Semichi of Algeria, Ambassador O'Sullivan of Australia, Ambassador Ditchev of Bulgaria, Ambassador Tóth of Hungary, Ambassador Baljinnyam of Mongolia and Ambassador Calovski of Yugoslavia. I wish these new colleagues every success in their work and look forward to friendly co-operation with them. At the same time I would like to say to those ambassadors who have left - Ambassador Chaalal, Ambassador Dietze, Ambassador Kosin, Ambassador Reese, Ambassador Sujka and Ambassador Morel - how much we miss them and wish them every success.

Under your able guidance, Mr. President, steady new progress has been made in the work of the Conference. In addition to other ad hoc committees, the ad hoc committees on an NTB, chemical weapons and outer space have been re-established today. New decisions have been taken on important agenda items such as nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war. In this connection, I wish to extend our congratulations to you as well as to the Conference. Our felicitations also go to Ambassador Chadha of India, Mr. Batsanov, head of the Soviet delegation, and Ambassador Moritán of Argentina on their appointment as chairmen of the three committees. We are convinced that with their outstanding skills and rich experience, they will guide the committees to new achievements. Here I would like to offer them as well as the officers of the Conference the close co-operation of the Chinese delegation. At the same time I would like to express once again our thanks to Ambassador Donowaki, Ambassador Hyltenius and Ambassador Shannon, the chairmen of the three ad hoc committees in 1990, and their officers, for their outstanding work and contributions.

The principled stands of the Chinese delegation on the nuclear test ban, the cessation of the nuclear arms race, the prevention of nuclear war, chemical weapons and outer space, including our position on the mandate of

(Mr. Hou, China)

those ad hoc committees, are consistent and well known to everyone, and therefore I will not elaborate. I would like to emphasize here that it has been the common objective cherished and pursued by people all over the world to free the world from chemical weapons. The conclusion of the negotiations on a convention on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons is an important task entrusted to the Conference on Disarmament by the international community. The current developments in the international situation have further proved the importance and urgency of accomplishing this historic task at an early date. The Chinese delegation would like to reiterate that the key to the success of our negotiations on a chemical weapons convention lies in firm adherence to the fundamental objective, namely the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons. It is a matter of course that an unconditional ban on the use of chemical weapons and the thorough destruction of all chemical weapons should be included. This is the common ground for the whole negotiation process. We are convinced that so long as all parties to the negotiations adhere to this commitment by conducting earnest and pragmatic negotiations and fully demonstrate their political will, we will surely attain our goal.

It is the set objective of China to work actively for the early conclusion of such a convention. The Chinese delegation will, as always, continue to co-operate with other delegations in a constructive and earnest manner in our joint efforts to achieve the early conclusion of a convention on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of China for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

Since there are no other speakers on this subject, I propose now that we again take up agenda item 6. You will recall that at our 578th plenary meeting, the Conference decided to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons. Consultations have been proceeding on the appointment of a Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, and I am happy to inform you that there now seems to be a consensus on the nomination of Ambassador Juraj Králik of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic for that position. I now invite the Conference to take action in that connection by appointing Mr. Králik Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I extend to Ambassador Králik the congratulations of the Conference on his appointment as Chairman of the subsidiary body re-established under agenda item 6 and, as in the case of other colleagues appointed for similar responsibilities, I wish him success in the performance of his duties as presiding officer of the Ad Hoc Committee.

With the actions taken today on organizational matters, we have agreed on arrangements for most items on our agenda, with the exception of agenda item 8, entitled "Comprehensive programme of disarmament". As you know, there is no consensus at present on the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee. At our last plenary meeting I informed you that if there was no agreement on a particular agenda item, in accordance with the provision contained in

(The President)

paragraph 5 (d) of document CD/1036, I would try to identify a special co-ordinator who would be responsible for reaching consensus on an appropriate organizational arrangement for that agenda item. Unfortunately, my consultations have produced no results yet, and it will therefore be up to my successor to continue my efforts in that respect.

With the decisions taken today, we are now in a position to start substantive work in the subsidiary bodies of the Conference. I am informed by the secretariat that it is the intention of the incoming President to convene a meeting of chairmen of subsidiary bodies to review the weekly timetable and the timing requirements of each ad hoc committee, so that we might use the resources allocated to us in the most effective way. On that basis, a weekly timetable will be circulated for the information of members in the delegation's pigeon-holes.

I should like to inform you that I have been approached by the representative of Hungary in connection with the possibility of holding an additional plenary meeting on Wednesday, 20 February. He has also raised the issue with the group co-ordinators. The reason for this request is a visit to Geneva by His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Hungary, who wishes to address the Conference on that date. I have consulted the co-ordinators and, on the basis of the views expressed by them, I have informed the representative of Hungary that the Conference would be happy to listen to the statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs. After discussing the matter with him, it was clear that the additional plenary meeting could not be held on Tuesday, 19 February, because of the Minister's previous engagements. This being the case, we agreed that the additional plenary meeting would be held on Wednesday, 20 February, at 10 a.m. Of course, it is understood that this recommendation that I submit to the plenary does not set a precedent for holding meetings on days other than Thursdays or Tuesdays. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Conference accepts the proposed arrangement.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I have no other business for consideration by the Conference today. Allow me therefore to make a concluding statement in my capacity as its President.

We began our 1991 session under unprecedented conditions obtaining in the international scene. Ironically, some of these were grave portents while others promised a great positive potential. The essence of the message from the President of my country, which I had the honour to convey to you at our first plenary meeting, was that we have to maximize the positive aspects while minimizing and reversing the dangerous trends. This will only be possible through a genuine process of multilateral consensus-building. Despite the sombre reflections and uncertainties engendered by the ongoing conflict, the seriousness and the spirit of compromise that have been evident during the past four weeks to finalize the start-up work of our 1991 session are indeed a source of encouragement.

As regards the organizational questions, I am certain that all my distinguished colleagues share my satisfaction that five ad hoc committees have been re-established.

(The President)

(On the important question of a nuclear test ban, I hope that the Ad Hoc Committee will be able to start substantive work soon under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Chadha of India on the basis of the decision we have taken a little while ago. The very fact that it was possible to re-establish this Ad Hoc Committee despite strong views held by the delegations concerning the terms of reference of this Committee signifies the great importance attached to this question. I have no doubt that the same spirit of compromise and understanding will prevail in carrying out the substantive work of the Committee in a way that will contribute to the achievement of a nuclear test ban, which is one of the highest-priority items on our agenda. I would like to express my deep appreciation to Ambassador Donowaki of Japan, who conducted painstaking and skilful consultations last year and during the inter-sessional period. His efforts have contributed in no small measure to facilitating substantive work on this item.)

We have also been able to reach early agreement on an appropriate organizational framework to deal with agenda items 2 and 3. I hope that this framework will facilitate a productive exchange on substantive issues involved, as it did last year, enabling us to reflect our perceptions in that regard in a more focused way in our report to the General Assembly this year.

The decision we have just taken on agenda item 4 once again signifies the spirit of compromise displayed by all groups and delegations. I do hope that, as the President of Sri Lanka stated in his message to the Conference, the demonstrated willingness to get on with the work of conclusively negotiating a treaty on this subject will augur well for the early realization of the convention. The meticulous care and skill with which the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Batsanov, has embarked upon his onerous duties make us confident that the Committee will make decisive progress this year.

Another priority item on our agenda, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, will be dealt with under the dynamic leadership of Ambassador Moritán of Argentina. I am pleased that it was possible to reach agreement on this important question, since the cumulative work done by the CD during past years has indicated interesting and productive avenues to explore on this subject.

The early agreement reached to re-establish ad hoc committees on radiological weapons and negative security assurances will have given sufficient time for all delegations to prepare for constructive work of substance on these important items. I am aware that the chairmen, Ambassador Králik of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic and Mr. Robertson of Canada, are conducting consultations with a view to organizing the work of the committees.

It was also possible to reach an understanding with regard to the first part of agenda item 7, entitled "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons". We will accordingly keep this matter under review and deal with it whenever necessary with a view to treating this subject in a way commensurate with the importance attached to it.

(The President)

After lengthy consultations and much skilful diplomacy displayed by Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan, several decisions were taken last year concerning the improved and effective functioning of the Conference. Due to the co-operation extended by all delegations and groups it was possible to reach an understanding with regard to the manner in which we should deal with this important subject in the Conference this year. Ambassador Kamal was accordingly appointed to conduct consultations bilaterally with members of the Conference to determine whether there would be common ground for addressing certain issues relating to this question. I am certain that Ambassador Kamal with his usual vigour and skill will continue his consultations with a view to building upon the area of agreement reached last year.

The Conference was also able, at an early stage, to take appropriate decisions facilitating the participation of non-members in the Conference. I take satisfaction - a sentiment which I am certain my distinguished colleagues share - at the fact that the trend of increasing participation by non-members continues. This is indicative of the growing awareness of and interest in substantive work being done at the Conference. It also augurs well for enhancing the multilateral character of our collective work.

Among the pending issues is the comprehensive programme on disarmament; agreement has yet to be reached on an appropriate organizational arrangement for dealing with this agenda item. Consultations will continue on this question.

In conclusion I would like to express my deep appreciation to the group co-ordinators and to all delegations who have always extended to me their fullest co-operation and understanding. The expeditious decisions on organizational matters were largely due to the co-operation extended to the President by all. A special word of gratitude should go to Ambassador Komatina, Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, and Ambassador Berasetagui, the Deputy Secretary-General, who have always provided valuable advice with professionalism and skill. I also thank the other members of the secretariat who have helped me and my delegation in carrying out our responsibilities during the past four weeks. I would also like to convey my thanks to the interpreters for the efficient job they always do, and particularly for their patience and goodwill today during the extended session. Finally, I would like to convey my best wishes to the incoming President, Ambassador Carl-Magnus Hyltenius of Sweden. We are already familiar with his competence and diplomatic skills and are confident of a most successful stewardship of the Conference under his presidency.

That concludes my statement. I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Wednesday, 20 February, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.